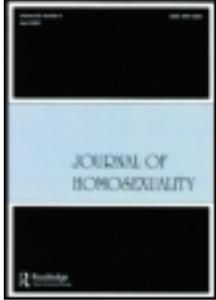


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Homosexuality and the Left in the Netherlands:

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Homosexuality and the Left in the Netherlands: 1890-1911

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SUMMARY. The attitudes of the Dutch socialist left toward homosexuality are examined, drawing upon a wide range of sources. At the end of the nineteenth century, a political debate on prostitution heightened social interest in sexuality in its diverse forms. Medical literature on sexual perversion was another starting point for the growing discussion of homosexuality. These debates were joined by Dutch socialists of divergent opinions. Whereas some of them wanted to acknowledge the right of homosexuals who were born that way to express themselves, only one exceptional author defended the right to homosexual sex. But most socialists were prejudiced against homosexuality and generally endorsed Frank van der Goes's proposal to eliminate homosexual behavior while accepting the notion of an inborn homosexual orientation.

Beginning in the 1890s, homosexuality became a topic of public debate in the Netherlands. Medical doctors, journalists, politicians, and novelists discussed it openly, albeit cautiously. A wide range of

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97

views was expressed, from extremely conservative to rather libertarian. It was initially an open debate in which many viewpoints were heard. In 1911, the criminalization of homosexual “lewdness” with minors ended two decades of effervescent discussions.¹

Dutch socialists took a very ambivalent position in this debate. By 1890, the anarchosocialist Social Democratic League (Sociaal-democratische Bond) of Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis was losing ground among the electorate. To my knowledge, it never took a public position on the issue of homosexuality. The year 1894 brought the founding of the Social Democratic Workers Party (Sociaaldemocratische Arbeiders Partij, or SDAP), which quickly regained the lost left votes. Many of its leaders, including Frank van der Goes, Florentius Marinus Wibaut, Louis Heijermans, Louis Maximiliaan Hermans, Willem Adriaan Bonger, and Pieter Jelles Troelstra, also discussed homosexual love.

When considering the statements made by Dutch socialists on homosexuality, we must recall two key concerns of the *fin de siècle*. First, sexuality had emerged as a social question, largely through the national debate on prostitution, and this debate strongly influenced the perception of homosexuality at the turn of the century. Next, we should also bear in mind that homosexuals themselves as well as psychiatrists developed a new theory of male love, also coining at this time a new terminology with such concepts as “homosexuality,” “uranism,” and “sexual inversion.” Moreover, we need to ask what an educated public could even know about homosexuality. I will therefore introduce some information on homosexuality in literary circles and on the level of press coverage in various periodicals that dealt extensively with sexual questions.

THE DEBATE ON PROSTITUTION

Recent publications have thrown a clear light on the debate on prostitution in nineteenth-century Western Europe. Health professionals sought to prevent venereal diseases through the medical control of prostitution, but these efforts were generally unsuccessful from both medical and political points of view.² The incidence of venereal disease failed to decrease appreciably, and the political support that liberals contributed to such efforts diminished as Chris-

tian political parties, feminists, and socialists began to question the ethical side of the medical control of prostitution. The Christian parties were opposed to it because they considered any such measures tantamount to the tacit legalization of sin; feminists were opposed to it because hygienic measures implied stigmatization of and discrimination against women; and socialists were opposed to it because it meant sacrificing lower-class women to bourgeois immorality. Christians, feminists, and socialists thus united in the struggle against prostitution, regarding it as a manifestation of atheistic, liberal immorality, of male chauvinism, and of capitalist decadence, respectively. In the Netherlands, this broad coalition defeated the liberals and the medical profession. National policy was changed, and free clinics for venereal diseases were instituted in the place of medical control of prostitutes.³

One important issue in the debate centered on male and female sexuality. Liberals and medical practitioners tended to regard male sexuality as simply irrepressible. From this perspective, males had to be granted sex in the precincts of prostitution, for otherwise their desires would endanger bourgeois daughters and female servants—or would find another outlet, such as masturbation and other vices. Dutch abolitionists, on the other hand, stoutly maintained that men could and should live in sexual abstinence, following the example of most women. The solution to the problem of male sexuality, they argued, was not legalized prostitution but improved possibilities for marriage, especially among the lower classes, as well as sex education. One Christian merchant marine captain wrote to the abolitionist *Het Maandblad: Getuigen en Redden* (The Monthly: Confess and Save)—which immediately exploited his remarks by publishing his letter as a pamphlet—that sailors were certainly able to practice sexual abstinence for long periods and indeed did so, as he and his colleagues could attest from their experience on board ships.⁴ Quite a different viewpoint was advanced by a regulationist doctor who had been a naval surgeon for many years: he reported that many men sinned alone or with a same-sex shipmate.⁵ A confirmation of the latter viewpoint was provided by the first autobiographical case study by a Dutch homosexual, which appeared in 1893 in *Psychiatrische Bladen* (Psychiatric Papers): here a naval officer confessed

to having had numerous homosexual contacts on board ships, both with other “urnings” and with normal sailors.⁶

Contrary to many published studies interpreting the fin de siècle as a period of sexual revolution, we can only state that in the Netherlands the liberal cause went down to defeat; the future would bring not sexual liberation, but male abstinence and heterosexual married life. This development seemed to fulfill Friedrich Engels’s prediction for the future under socialism: man will be monogamous as woman already is.⁷ Socialists supported the heterosexual policy wholeheartedly.

THE MEDICALIZATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Another effect of the debate on prostitution was the emergence of public discussion on homosexuality. Once the abolitionists had achieved their primary goal, they broadened their campaign and started to specify new sexual problems such as abortion, pornography, child abuse, incest, and unnatural vices. Queer love and sex certainly had flourished under the cover of normal prostitution, which meant that these pleasures also came under attack in the course of the abolitionist campaign of the 1890s. It is entirely likely that young men with homosexual preferences entering the sexual scene embraced the abolitionist critique of sexual promiscuity. They may have rejected sexual pleasures in favor of sexual abstinence, as did their socialist and feminist friends;⁸ but they had no future in marriage.

A new theory and a new reality of homosexuality came into being in the nineties. What had been regarded as licentious practices of inverted lovers addicted to sodomitical pleasures due to decadence or advanced age was now transformed into the biological destiny of born homosexuals. Male-male lust had been part and parcel of libertine lifestyles; now it became a personal identity, explainable in terms of innate factors. Parallel to hermaphroditism, homosexual preference was regarded as the psychic side of a physiological peculiarity. As defined by the German jurist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, a male homosexual was a female soul in a male body.⁹ Ulrich’s paradigm had many practical consequences, but the most significant for socialist theory was the possibility of differentiating a way of acting—this

man carries out homosexual practices—from a state of being—this man is a homosexual. Basing their pleas on the state of being, the advocates of homosexual emancipation were rather unclear as to whether or to what extent being a homosexual even meant having homosexual sex. The socialists would later follow this lead with their apologetics for the right to be a homosexual while simultaneously affirming the necessity of sexual abstinence outside of marriage. This captures the fundamental ambivalence of socialism toward homosexuality.

SOCIALISTS' ACQUAINTANCE WITH HOMOSEXUALS

Finally, we must consider the actual presence of homosexuals and homosexuality in socialist circles. From the outset, some socialist leaders—notably Van der Goes and Wibaut—were deeply involved in Aestheticism, the modernist literary current of the eighties which aspired to a renewal of the arts in the Netherlands. Van der Goes was coeditor of *De Nieuwe Gids* (The New Guide), the leading journal of this movement, and Wibaut wrote for it. In 1890, Van der Goes, Lodewijk van Deyssel (pseudonym of Karel Alberdingk Thijm), and Frederik van Eeden engaged in a heated debate on socialism and art. The leader of the movement, Willem Kloos, was a tormented homosexual whose finest poetry was inspired by affairs of passion. The veiled love lyrics he exchanged with Albert Verwey, another Aestheticist poet, were published at that time, Verwey's part under the title "Of a Love Named Friendship."¹⁰ Van Deyssel's second novel, *De kleine republiek* (The Little Republic, 1888), was clearly homoerotic and foregrounded the theme of special friendship in a boarding school. This book was decidedly autobiographical, for Van Deyssel himself had been expelled from the renowned Catholic boarding school Rolduc because of his involvement in a special friendship.¹¹

Arnold Aletrino, a physician and a novelist who was both a friend of Van der Goes and a regular contributor to *De Nieuwe Gids*, emerged as the first spokesman of homosexual emancipation in the Netherlands in 1897.¹² Aletrino was probably not a homosexual but a sexual sadist.¹³ His friend and pupil Jacob Israël de Haan was to be far more open about his sexual preferences. De Haan is perhaps best described as a sadomasochistic and pedophile homosexual, and from 1904 on-

wards he was at the center of major scandals.¹⁴ Lucien Sophie Albert Marie von Römer, almost certainly a bisexual, was the second and most important advocate of homosexual emancipation in the first decade of the twentieth century; he also participated in progressive and socialist circles and wrote on homosexuality for socialist journals.¹⁵ Finally, the leading socialist poet Carel Steven Adama van Scheltema was a bisexual, but his preference was closely guarded. Thus, Dutch socialists may well have known homosexuals personally; but as documented by the correspondence of Adama van Scheltema with his best friend, the mathematician Luitzen Egbertus Jan Brouwer, the subject of homosexual practices was absolutely taboo.¹⁶ De Haan alone took a public stand in defense of his homosexual desires.

Beginning in the 1880s, the Dutch press occasionally mentioned pederastic and sodomitic scandals. Based on such reports in the daily press, brief articles in *Het Maandblad: Getuigen en Redden* served up such scandals with considerable regularity.¹⁷ And as we will see in the following section, socialist-oriented journals also exploited this sort of press coverage, which inevitably conveyed a negative image of inverted lovers. These accounts were thus brought to the attention of a broad socialist readership. Moreover, sexual perversions were also treated from 1887 onwards in books and pamphlets, mostly translations from the French.¹⁸ Although these publications had a semischolarly tone, they certainly targeted a reading public interested in pornography, as did the periodical press.

SOCIALISTS AND HOMOSEXUALITY

In the following, I will describe in some detail four contexts in which socialists devoted attention to homosexuality. First, in the 1890s, the socialist-oriented yellow press exposed and denounced inverted lovers. Second, in 1904, De Haan was discharged as editor of the children's column of the socialist daily *Het Volk* (The People) after publishing an outspokenly homosexual novel, *Pijpelijntjes* (Pipelines). Third, from 1904 on, advocates of homosexual emancipation and socialists discussed homosexuality in several socialist journals. And finally, in 1911, the Christian government introduced new sex laws that penalized, among other things, "lewdness" with

same-sex minors. Dutch socialists played a prominent role in the parliamentary debates on these laws.

THE YELLOW PRESS

The socialist yellow newspaper *De Roode Duivel* (The Red Devil) edited by Louis Maximiliaan Hermans, who later became a socialist delegate to the parliament, took a stance opposed to crown, church, and capital. Late in 1893, it mentioned two noblemen from The Hague apprehended in an act of “unnatural fornication” and commented ironically: “Unnatural fornication and the rape of innocent girls have a good chance of becoming civic virtues, for the nobility and clergy are cultivating them assiduously.”¹⁹ Some weeks later, the rape of several boys by a Catholic priest was mentioned.²⁰ Jokes linking pederasty and Catholicism appeared in several other issues of the year 1894.²¹ One of these issues also pilloried a “child rapist, baronet Van Heeckeren.”²² In 1897, when a Protestant teacher had been accused of pederasty, the famous Calvinist leader Abraham Kuyper was implicated in a joke; *De Roode Duivel* suggested that he had learned these sins from close reading of the Bible.²³ Some weeks later, after the police closed a male bordello in Arnhem, *De Roode Duivel* commented: “Several high-ranking men are leaving the city in a hurry, fearing involvement in the scandal of pederasty and male love. Numerous large mansions stand empty as an advertisement of the morals of our highest classes.”²⁴ New jokes on this case followed a week later.²⁵ In the summer of the same year, the doctor of the Amsterdam prison was the object of a sneer: his rectal temperature was said to have risen enormously since he learned he could return to his job in prison.²⁶ At the end of the year, the journal announced that it was ceasing publication because of its linkage with a new weekly, *De Amsterdamsche Lantaarn* (The Amsterdam Lantern), which was even more scandalous.²⁷ Aiming at heightened respectability, the socialists now had to abandon the terrain of yellow journalism, and Hermans himself became a member of parliament.

Bram Cornelisse, the editor of *De Amsterdamsche Lantaarn*, another socialist-oriented yellow newspaper, started his journalistic career in 1897 with a leaflet entitled “Ontmaskering! Geen genade!

Onthullingen uit de Sodom-Sociëteit” (Unmasking! No Mercy! Revelations from the Sodom-Society) concerning a beerhouse where sodomites gathered. According to Cornelisse, the owner, one George Hermans, was a sodomite who sold quack cures for venereal diseases, providing him with the opportunity “to give rein to his dissolute passions.” Any normal visitor who happened into this bar would be sickened by the caresses exchanged among males, and as a socialist Cornelisse declared his indignation at portraits of the royal family prominently displayed here. (Royalism appears to be a longstanding feature of the Dutch gay world.) Cornelisse went on to recount the story of one young man who had been asked by George Hermans whether he was willing to serve as secretary to a rich man: as soon as he had discerned the debauched intentions of this male procurer, the youngster had fled in utter disgust.²⁸

Beginning with the first issue of *De Amsterdamsche Lantaarn* on September 17, 1897, Cornelisse launched a series entitled “In the Pillory.” The first victim selected for exposure was George Hermans.²⁹ The same issue mentioned an inquiry in the Amsterdam City Council concerning indecent publications that were being freely distributed in the city, presumably the aforementioned pamphlet. Cornelisse indeed considered himself a target of this inquiry, for he immediately responded by asking whether the City Council intended to defend the pederasts and child abusers he was denouncing.³⁰ The third issue brought a confirmation of the effectiveness of Cornelisse’s pillory: the windows of Hermans’s beerhouse had been smashed—as would soon be revealed—by Cornelisse himself!³¹ He ultimately received a one-week jail sentence for this offense.³² Subsequent issues continued to excoriate many inverted lovers in a somewhat veiled manner, and yet another sodomites’ bar was placed in the pillory.³³ Cornelisse’s anti-pederastic scandal mongering continued throughout 1898. The next year, he joked about the possible foundation of a “pederasts’ club” which would certainly obtain royal assent.³⁴ (Royal assent was in fact finally granted to a Dutch homosexual emancipation organization in 1973, sixty-one years after the movement was founded.) Although Cornelisse’s weekly continued to appear for five more years, no copies have survived, so we can no longer trace the course of its anti-homosexual crusade.

Just as *De Roode Duivel* had denounced pederasts among the clergy, nobility, and upper bourgeoisie, Cornelisse frequently pilloried inverted lovers in *De Amsterdamsche Lantaarn*. His attacks were not limited to high-ranking men, for his main target was the gathering places of pederasts in Amsterdam. All the while, he was also exposing bordellos, prostitution, and incest. Whereas *De Roode Duivel* had been more interested in political scandals, Cornelisse made sexual scandals his trademark. We do not know what happened to George Hermans and his bar after Cornelisse's exposé, but the second bar that he denounced was closed a short time later. All in all, the socialist yellow press participated in upholding an abhorrent image of homosexuality, depicting it primarily as a vice of patricians or priests and using this argument to draw the working class into the SDAP.

THE JACOB ISRAËL DE HAAN SCANDAL

In 1904, Jacob Israël de Haan, a Jewish gay novelist and later a poet, provoked a scandal with his first novel *Pijpelijntjes*.³⁵ The book's protagonist was a promiscuous boy-lover and homosexual masochist. At the time, De Haan was responsible for the children's column in the socialist daily *Het Volk*, a position from which he was abruptly dismissed following the novel's publication; he was simultaneously fired as a schoolteacher. Clearly autobiographical in character, *Pijpelijntjes* discussed the lives and loves of two students named Joop and Sam—the actual nicknames of De Haan and Arnold Aletrino, who was a physician at that time. Aletrino, to whom the book was dedicated, had courageously and publicly defended homosexuality as a sexual preference (but not as a sexual practice) both in the leading Dutch psychiatric journal and at the Fifth Congress for Criminal Anthropology, which had drawn a learned audience—including Cesare Lombroso—to Amsterdam in 1901.³⁶ Aletrino had probably helped De Haan in his coming out as a homosexual, but De Haan went too far when he depicted him as a sadomasochistic bisexual (Aletrino was at the time in his second marriage; his first wife had committed suicide)—too far both for Aletrino and for his own fiancée. They bought up nearly the entire first edition of the novel and had it destroyed. Shortly afterward, De

Haan published a revised edition, without the dedication to Aletrino and with two new names for the leading characters; on the other hand, the second edition of the novel was even more homoerotic than the first.³⁷

The SDAP was in a difficult situation. It was election time, and the Christian parties were using homosexual emancipation as championed by Aletrino and Von Römer to attack liberal and socialist institutions. The socialists were simultaneously engaged in a quarrel with the Christian parties over the issue of socialist teachers, arguing that there was a distinction between teachers' politics and their profession, and that socialists were entirely capable of teaching neutrally to non-socialist children. But with the publication of *Pijpelijntjes* by the children's columnist of their own daily, the socialists were not only embroiled in a homosexual scandal but snared in a contradiction: they were disregarding a journalist's professional capabilities and firing him because of his morality. For some time, letters were exchanged in *Het Volk* between De Haan and Pieter Lodewijk Tak, the editor and president of the SDAP, with many readers and party leaders commenting. In 1905, De Haan published an *Open brief aan P. L. Tak* (Open Letter to P. L. Tak), a verbose and rather ineffectual defense. He attacked the hypocrisy, stupidity, and cultural barbarism of the socialists but continued to hope for clemency from the socialist leadership. Tak—himself a bachelor—remained quite firm: male love could be discussed by scholars, but not in literature, for books such as De Haan's would incite readers to sexual perversions. He regarded it as out of the question to employ a children's columnist who had written such a harmful book.³⁸

Despite this setback, De Haan went on writing homosexual novels and poetry, staunchly adhering to his uncompromising vision of justice. After a journey to Russia, he authored a pamphlet against the tsarist prison system³⁹ as well a second gay novel, *Pathologieën* (1908), with pronounced decadent and sadomasochistic thematics. A Zionist, De Haan moved to Palestine at the end of World War I but, angered by the unwillingness of the Zionists to cooperate with the Arabs, joined the anti-Zionist movement of orthodox Jews who had coexisted with the Arabs in Palestine for centuries. For this "betrayal," De Haan was slain in 1924 by Zionists who sought to

pin the blame on the Arabs, suggesting that they had murdered De Haan because of his pederasty. De Haan died as an advocate of some of the twentieth century's losers: Palestinian Arabs, Russian prisoners, and Western European homosexuals.

HOMOSEXUAL EMANCIPATION AND DUTCH SOCIALISM

Lucien von Römer, a physician and scholarly collaborator of Hirschfeld, was the most outspoken advocate of homosexual emancipation in the Netherlands in the first decade of the twentieth century. He authored books, lengthy essays for Hirschfeld's *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen* (Yearbook for Sexual Intermediates), a number of pamphlets against both the Christian political leader Abraham Kuyper and a university professor who had dared to declare the *Jahrbuch* tendentious, and some articles for the socialist press.

The debate sparked by Von Römer began with his lecture on homosexuality for the Reinlevenbeweging (Pure Life Movement), a Christian-socialist movement that promoted the sort of sexual mores favored by the abolitionists. They maintained that sexual relations were permissible only for heterosexual couples when procreation was possible and love was present. All other sexual practices, especially prostitution and masturbation, but also homosexuality and lustful heterosexuality, were considered impure. Arguing that homosexuality was a natural sexual variation, Von Römer tried to get homosexual love placed on an equal footing with idealized heterosexual love. Most leaders of the Reinleven movement condemned this standpoint, as did Aletrino, who was willing to defend homosexuality only as an orientation, not as a practice. The Christian leader Kuyper joked that Von Römer was defending the sins of Sodom in the name of pure life.⁴⁰

In the November 1904 issue of the theoretical journal of the SDAP, *De Nieuwe Tijd* (The New Age), the socialist physician Louis Heijermans discussed Von Römer's and Hirschfeld's theories. If homosexuals were natural variations, he argued, then they were certainly biological zeroes ("non-valeurs"). Since it did not contribute to human propagation, homosexuality was characterized

by Heijermans as a sick condition to be placed on a par with masturbation. The danger posed by homosexuality was the seduction of normal young men, and the state had to control such corruption. Interestingly, Heijermans stated that there was no socialist explanation for homosexuality.⁴¹ Von Römer replied furiously, charging that his objectivity was being impugned because he was a homosexual—an inference which Heijermans denied. Von Römer reaffirmed his conviction that homosexuality was a natural variation.⁴² He elided the sexual side of the homosexual experience, so that Heijermans in his reply again had the opportunity to reproach homosexuals for their sexual escapades.⁴²

In 1905, Von Römer published “Letters to My Friend: Love Life” in the Flemish socialist monthly *Ontwaking* (Awakening). Here he stated: “A sexual act does not defile our lives and our souls, nor is the sexual in itself impure and vile, for it is high and holy when it flares up from men’s ecstasy of soul at the approach of Beauty and Goodness, at being in a life that knows no misery. But impure and vile is the lewd desire for lust, only for lust itself.”⁴⁴ With this spirited article, published outside the realm of Dutch debates, Von Römer concluded the discussion, for no one responded to him anymore.

The single most important contribution to the socialist discussion was a lecture entitled “Social Examination of Homosexuality” given by Frank van der Goes, the ideological leader of the SDAP, on November 7, 1907.⁴⁵ Van der Goes’s position was clear: homosexuality as an orientation had to be acknowledged, but as a practice it had to be “eradicated” (an outlook that anticipated the position later taken by Wilhelm Reich and by many churches nowadays). In the ideal socialist state it would no longer exist as a sexual experience. He acknowledged the existence of an innate homosexuality but opined at the same time that homosexuality could be learned. Homosexuality had in some periods been a contagious or epidemic disease: during the Crusades, under certain kings such as Henry III of France, in the German military of his day (the lecture coincided with the Eulenburg scandal in Germany), in countries with sharp class differences such as classical Greece and Rome. It was very rare, Van der Goes maintained, among classless groups—students and workers, for example. Under capitalism and in slave societies,

it was typically a manifestation of the abuse of power. Such abuses would cease to exist under socialism, when there would be no pleasure outside the realm of labor.⁴⁶

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

Debauchery was made a political issue by the Christian parties that held political power in the Netherlands beginning in 1900. Dutch sex laws had already become more restrictive under nineteenth-century liberal regimes, but liberals lacked a political vocabulary to discuss sexuality because of their ideology of private and public spheres: sex was private and should thus be nonpolitical. Starting at the turn of the century, however, and continuing until 1911, Christian leaders hesitantly introduced such legislation into parliament. When new sex laws were first proposed by Minister of Justice Antonius Petrus Laurentius Nelissen, same-sex practices were not even mentioned. Nelissen retired soon afterwards and was succeeded by Edmond Hubert Robert Regout, who had long urged the passage of a special law against homosexual abuses.⁴⁷ As soon as he became minister, Regout proposed an amendment to the original draft (Article 248ter), which penalized the seduction of minors, irrespective of gender, by financial inducement; the amendment (Article 248bis) specifically called for the criminalization of “lewdness” with same-sex minors.⁴⁸

In the parliamentary debates which ensued, three currents could be discerned. The first was supported by the Christian parties that followed Regout in all respects, if necessary quoting the Bible. A second, very active group was the socialists and progressive liberals. They favored defeating Regout’s amendment on the homosexual seduction of minors and restoring the original Nelissen draft. A third group consisted of traditional liberals, who rejected both proposals because they interfered too much in private life. In the end, both Nelissen’s original draft and Regout’s amendment were introduced. Notwithstanding their differences of opinion on the criminalization of homosexuality, all the speakers in parliament—Christians, socialists and progressives, and traditional liberals—made it abundantly clear that they loathed homosexuals, or at best pitied them. The point of the second current, which included the socialists, was that sanctions had to be imposed for the seduction of young women as well as

young men.⁴⁹ Moreover, some liberal members of parliament voiced concern that the specific criminalization of homosexual acts might result in the emergence of a homosexual emancipation movement like that in Germany.⁵⁰ Liberals and socialists wanted to punish seduction by financial inducement, not sexual acts per se. They reasoned that older men could be seduced by younger men or women of means, in which case it would be unjust to hold the senior party guilty; to do so would moreover be an invitation to blackmail. On the level of language, all groups spoke of “homosexuality”; one traditional liberal used the Latin term “*crimen nefandum*,” and Regout also used the Greek term “*pederasty*.”⁵¹

At one point in the debate, the leader of the Dutch socialists stated that the criminal law amendment he backed was inspired by the same feeling of morality shared by all other members of parliament.⁵² He argued that he was nonetheless opposed to any special criminalization of homosexual acts, as were the liberals and even a respected old Christian leader, Alexander Frederik de Savornin Lohman. The proposal jointly sponsored by liberals and socialists was rejected by a vote of 61 to 22, and Regout’s article 248bis concerning homosexual acts with minors passed by a vote of 50 to 34. Thirteen parliamentarians voted against both proposals, but none of them was a socialist.⁵³ The traditional liberals opposed state moral controls even more strongly than did the socialists, who actually took an active part in drafting the sex laws. The socialist amendment, in revised form, became part of the criminal law.

CONCLUSION

As Wilfried Eissler has found in the case of the German socialists of the Weimar years, Dutch socialists between 1890 and 1911 were quite ambivalent in their attitudes towards homosexuality.⁵⁴ Their critique of capitalism led to an anti-liberal outlook that enabled them to join with the Christian parties on many points concerning morality. This was clearly the case with prostitution and in some respects also with homosexuality. On the other hand, liberals never enunciated a consistent political perspective on sexuality, because they considered it a private affair. They relied strongly on the medical profession for a sexual ideology, but this alliance was weak.

While the liberals were in principle opposed to state intervention, in practice they allowed the medical profession to intervene forcibly in private affairs, as in the matter of prostitution. Liberals thus undermined their own position without developing a consistent new ethic. In the absence of a clear-cut ideology, they had to yield the terrain of sexuality to new political groups, such as the Christian parties, feminists, and socialists.

But the socialists likewise did not dare to elaborate an explicit sexual ideology. Moreover, they were too devoted to economic struggles and to an ideology of utility, labor, and rationality to conceive of the importance of moral debates. With both liberals and socialists yielding on this issue to other groups, the Christians found it easy to take the high moral ground. The interventions of the socialists in the parliamentary debate cannot be considered as in any sense liberatory for homosexuals; indeed, quite the contrary. Denunciations of pederasts and inverted lovers in the socialist-oriented yellow press were perhaps most indicative of the popular perspective on homosexuality in leftist circles.

The most explicit socialist text on homosexuality was the 1907 lecture by Frank van der Goes. He stated quite clearly that homosexuality had to be acknowledged as an inborn orientation; and on this point he concurred with homosexual emancipation. But he went on to say that homosexual practices had to be eliminated—if not in capitalist, then in socialist society. The progressiveness of socialists was thus quite limited on the matter of homosexuality. Their negative attitude toward homosexual practices notwithstanding, they opposed Article 248bis, and socialist leaders such as Van der Goes were later the first to sign a petition against this law.⁵⁵ The most positive thing we can say about the socialists is that in contrast to the Christian parties, they did not want to use the criminal law to campaign against homosexuals under the prevailing conditions of capitalism. Concerning the socialist state they envisioned for the future, their tactics were to be more in the realm of prevention, as in the case of prostitution: sex education, policies promoting better possibilities for marital life, and marriage itself. Centered on rationality, labor, and utility, traditional socialist ideologies were anti-hedonist and anti-libertarian. In the sphere of sexual practices, they condoned at most a restrained heterosexuality and were fundamentally homophobic.

AUTHOR NOTE

Gert Hekma is Codirector of Homostudies within the Sociologisch Instituut of the Universiteit van Amsterdam. He has published widely on the history and sociology of sexuality and homosexuality, and he was coeditor of *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe* (co-published simultaneously as *Journal of Homosexuality*, 16(2)) (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1989). His most recent book deals with homosexuals in the world of sports.

NOTES

1. The main introduction to the history of homosexuality in this period for the Netherlands is Gert Hekma, *Homoseksualiteit, een medische reputatie: De uitdoktering van de homoseksueel in negentiende-eeuws Nederland* (Amsterdam: SUA, 1987).

2. The main defense of medical control of prostitutes is Alexandre Jean Baptiste Parent Duchatelêt, *De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris* (Paris: Baillière, 1836). See also Alain Corbin, *Les filles de noce: Misère sexuelle et prostitution, 19e siècle* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1978), and Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

3. See Hekma, pp. 149-64.

4. K. H., "Is ontucht noodzakelijk?" *Het Maandblad: Getuigen en Redden* 5.3 (March, 1883): 44-45.

5. Gillis van Overbeek de Meijer, "Boekbespreking," *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde* 36, part 2 (1892): 421-22.

6. Pierre F. Spaink, "Bijdrage tot de casuïstiek der urningen," *Psychiatrische Bladen* 11 (1893): 143-65; reprinted in *Honderd jaar homoseksuelen: Documenten over de uitdoktering van homoseksualiteit*, ed. Gert Hekma (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1992), pp. 40-61.

7. Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1883), reprinted in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works in One Volume* (New York: International Publishers, 1968), p. 511: "We are now approaching a social revolution in which the hitherto existing economic foundations of monogamy will disappear just as certainly as will those of its supplement-prostitution. . . . Since monogamy arose from economic causes, will it disappear when these causes disappear? One might not unjustly answer: far from disappearing, it will only begin to be completely realized. For with the conversion of the means of production into social property, wage labor, the proletariat, also disappears, and therewith, also, the necessity for a certain-statistically calculable-number of women to surrender themselves for money. Prostitution disappears; monogamy, instead of declining, finally becomes a reality—for the men as well."

8. Marc-André Raffalovich, *Uranisme et unisexualité* (Lyon: Storck; Paris: Masson, 1896) defended homosexual love and simultaneously advocated sexual abstinence for homosexuals, condemning the sexual escapades of Oscar Wilde. Raffalovich was a poet of Russian origin who wrote scholarly works on uranism in French and homoerotic poetry in English. See Timothy d'Arch Smith, *Love in Earnest: Some Notes on the Lives and Writings of English "Uranian" Poets from 1889 to 1930* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 29-34, and Hans Hafkamp, "Een katholieke apologet van de kuise mannenliefde: Marc-André Raffalovich (1864-1934)," in *Pijlen van naamloze liefde: Pioniers van de homo-emanipatie*, ed. Hans Hafkamp and Maurice van Lieshout (Amsterdam: SUA, 1988), pp. 62-67.

9. On Ulrichs, see Hubert Kennedy, *Ulrichs: The Life and Works of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Pioneer of the Modern Gay Movement* (Boston: Aylson, 1988).

10. On Kloos and his relations, see Peter van Eeten, *Dichterlijk labirint* (Amsterdam: Polak & Van Gennep, 1963), and Peter Kralt, *De Dichter, zijn Geliefden en zijn Muze: Over de vroege poëzie van Willem Kloos* (Leiden: Dimensie, 1985).

11. See Harry G. M. Prick, *Jongenslief en jongensleed: Karel Alberdingk Thijm als leerling van de kostschool Rolduc; Lodewijk van Deysssel als auteur van De Kleine Republiek* (Nijmegen: Cadans, 1989).

12. See Arnold Aletrino, "Over uranisme en het laatste boek van Raffalovich (Marc André)," *Psychiatrische en Neurologische Bladen* 1 (1897): 351-65, 452-83.

13. See Kees Joosse, *Arnold Aletrino: Pessimist met perspectief* (Amsterdam: Thomas Rap, 1986), and my review "De strijd van Arnold Aletrino tegen christelijke zedenmeesters," *De Groene* (November 16, 1986), p. 17.

14. The major, albeit homophobic, biography of De Haan is Jaap Meijer, *De zoon van de gazzen* (Amsterdam: Polak & Van Gennep, 1967). His major scandal is described in detail by Rob Delvigne and Leo Ross in their introduction to the reprint of J. I. de Haan, *Open brief aan P. L. Tak* (Amsterdam: Peter van Velden, 1982; 1st ed., Amsterdam: Van Cleef, 1905).

15. See Maurice van Lieshout, "Het ongekende leed van een tropendokter: Lucien von Römer (1873-1965)," in *Pijlen van naamloze liefde*, pp. 89-95.

16. *L. E. J. Brouwer & C. S. Adama van Scheltema: Droeve snaar, vriend van mij. Brieven*, ed. Dirk van Dalen (Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers, 1984). The diaries of Adama van Scheltema, which contain many passages on male love, are preserved in the Nederlands Letterkundig Museum, The Hague.

17. See, for example, the discussion of Oscar Wilde in *Het Maandblad: Getuigen en Redden* 17 (1895): 86-87.

18. See, for example, Louis Martineau, *De clandestiene prostitutie* (Amsterdam: A. van Klaveren, 1888; 1st French ed. 1885), and Edmond Dupouy, *De prostitutie bij de volken der oudheid* (Amsterdam: A. van Klaveren, 1889; 1st French ed. 1887). Jacobus Schoondermark was the principal Dutch translator of such books and pamphlets on public health, sexual perversion, and neo-Malthusianism. See Gert Hekma, "De windhandel met een hersenschim: J. Schoondermark (1849-1915)," in *Pijlen van naamloze liefde*, pp. 68-73.

19. *De Roode Duivel* 2.20 (December 11, 1893): 3, 4.
20. *Ibid.*, 2.29 (February 12, 1894).
21. *Ibid.* 2.29 (April 23, 1894); 3.1 (August 6, 1894); 3.2 (August 13, 1894); and 3.3 (August 20, 1894).
22. *Ibid.* 2.3 (August 20, 1894).
23. *Ibid.* 5.1 (January 4, 1897).
24. *Ibid.* 5.8 (February 22, 1897).
25. *Ibid.* 5.9 (February 29, 1897).
26. *Ibid.* 5.34 (August 23, 1897).
27. *Ibid.* 5.50 (December 13, 1897).
28. "Ontmaskering! Geen genade! Onthullingen uit de Sodom-Sociëteit" (Amsterdam: no publisher, 1897); the leaflet is in the Gemeente Archief Amsterdam, B (1897) no. 1.
29. *De Amsterdamsche Lantaarn* 1.1 (September 17, 1897): 1.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 3
31. *Ibid.* 1.3 (October 2, 1897): 1; 1.5 (October 16, 1897): 1.
32. *Ibid.* 1.5 (October 16, 1897): 1.
33. *Ibid.* 1.11 (November 27, 1897): 1. A few weeks earlier, mention had been made of a hairdresser who wanted to start an asylum in Italy or Spain "where men can love each other"; *ibid.* 1.8 (November 6, 1897): 2.
34. *Ibid.* 1.24 (February 26, 1898): 4; continued in the next issue 1.25 (March 5, 1898): 4. On the place of the implicated bar, there is nowadays a gay/lesbian restaurant "De Huyschkamer." The next issue of *De Amsterdamsche Lantaarn* again featured George Hermans, 1:26 (March 12, 1898): 4.
35. Jacob Israël de Haan, *Pijpelijntjes* (Amsterdam: Van Cleef, 1904); reprinted with an afterword by Wim J. Simons, "De geschiedenis van een onzedelijk boek" (The Hague: Kruseman, 1974).
36. Arnold Aletrino, "La situation sociale de l'uraniste," in *Actes du cinquième congrès international d'anthropologie criminelle* (Amsterdam), pp. 25-36; the lecture itself appears on pp. 473-94, along with the discussion in which Lombroso, among others, participated.
37. On the novel and the scandal it provoked, see Joosse, pp. 154-66.
38. The best account of the scandal is by Delvigne and Ross (see note 14).
39. Jacob Israël de Haan, *In Russische gevangenissen* (Amsterdam: Maatschappij voor Goede en Goedkoope Lectuur, 1913).
40. Lucien S. A. M. von Römer, "Boekbespreking," *Rein Leven* 2.9 (March, 1903): 63-66. A discussion follows in the issues 3.9-12 (March-June, 1904), ending with an official debate at the General Meeting of the Movement, which resolved to combat homosexual acts on principle; see 4.3 (September, 1904). The discussion is aptly summarized by Von Römer himself in *Ongekend leed* (Amsterdam: G. P. Tierrie, 1904), pp. 51-77; reprinted in *Honderd jaar homoseksuelen* (see note 6), pp. 152-78.
41. L. Heijermans, "Het derde geslacht," *De Nieuwe Tijd* 9 (1904): 774-79.
42. Lucien S. A. M. von Römer, "Nogmaals het derde geslacht," *ibid.*, pp. 857-62.

43. L. Heijermans, "Antwoord aan den heer L. S. A. M. von Römer," *ibid.*, pp. 863-66.
44. Lucien S. A. M. von Römer, "Brieven aan mijn vriend. I. Liefde-Leven," *Ontwaking* new series 5.1 (January, 1905): 25-31; quote on p. 31.
45. Van der Goes's lecture was part of a series on "Prostitution and Alcoholism." The notes for this lecture are preserved in the Van der Goes files of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, and the debate on his lecture was reported in *Het Volk*.
46. Frank van der Goes, "Maatschappelijke beschouwing van de Homosexualiteit," reprinted in *Homoseksualiteit, een medische reputatie* (see note 1), pp. 234-35.
47. Regout's vehement proposals in parliament to criminalize "lewdness" with same-sex minors are reported in *Het Maandblad: Getuigen en Redden*, 28.1 (January, 1906): 12; 29.1 (January, 1907): 16; and 30.1 (January, 1908): 6.
48. *Handelingen der Staten-Generaal* (February 24, 1911), p. 1523. The debates continued on February 28 and March 1, and are published on pp. 1523-67.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 1525-27; with Troelstra's speech.
50. E.g., the liberal M. Tydeman, *ibid.*, p. 1536.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 1541.
52. Troelstra, *ibid.*, p. 1561.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 1567.
54. Wilfried U. Eissler, *Arbeiterparteien und Homosexuellenfrage: Zur Sexualpolitik von SPD und KPD in der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Rosa Winkel, 1980). See also other articles in this volume.
55. The list of signatures is appended to the tract *Wat iedereen behoort te weten omtrent Uranisme* (The Hague: Nederlandsche afdeling van het "Wissenschaftlich-Humanitär-Komitee," 1912); reprinted in *Een groeiend zedelijk kwaad: Documenten over de criminalisering en emancipatie van homoseksuelen 1910-1916*, ed. Maurice van Lieshout (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1993), pp. 167-218. Based on Hirschfeld's *Was soll das Volk vom dritten Geschlecht wissen?* (Leipzig: Max Spohr, 1901), this brochure was translated and revised for the Dutch situation by Jacob Anton Schorer, the leader of the Dutch chapter of the Wissenschaftlich-humanitäres Komitee founded in 1912 as a reaction to the inclusion of article 248bis in the criminal law. The list of signatories included mostly progressive writers and doctors; even the leaders of the Reinleven movement signed it.